United Nations E/C.2/1999/2/Add.18

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
30 August 1999
English
Original: English/French

Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations
Resumed 1999 session
Agenda item 4
Review of quadrennial reports submitted by non-governmental organizations in general and special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

Quadrennial reports, 1994-1997 or 1995-1998, submitted through the Secretary-General pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 1996

Addendum

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99-24853 (E) 021199

1. International Association for the Defence of Religious Liberty

(Special consultative status granted in 1978)

Goals and purpose of the Association

The goal of the International Association for the Defence of Religious Liberties is to spread ideas of tolerance and defend every individual's right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; a right that implies the freedom to believe or not to believe, the freedom to change one's convictions or religion and to practise one's religion, individually or collectively, in public or in private, through worship, written or oral instruction, and attendance or officiation at rites (see article 2 of the Statutes). Its activities seek to create a climate of understanding and respect conducive to democratic liberties, justice and peace.

In the period 1994-1998, four national sections joined the 13 earlier ones: Angola (1998), the Czech Republic (1998), Mozambique (1998) and Slovakia (1998).

The Association has been in consultative status as a non-governmental organization with the Council of Europe since 1985. It is in the process of renewing the status it was granted in 1986 as an international organization recognized by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

Participation in the work of the subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council and in other United Nations forums

The Secretary-General or his representatives participated from 1994 to 1997 in the sessions of the Commission on Human Rights and the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, held annually at the Palais des Nations in Geneva. Their participation consisted in speaking on the agenda items and meeting with the Special Rapporteur on Religious Intolerance and his assistants, with members of government missions to the Commission and with experts of the Subcommission, in order to provide them with necessary information for their consideration.

Commission on Human Rights, Geneva:

- 31 January to 31 March 1994: agenda items 12, 17, 20, 22 and 23;
- 30 January to 10 March 1995: agenda items 10, 12, 20, 22 and 24;
- 18 March to 26 April 1996: agenda items 10, 16, 18 and 20;
- 10 March to 18 April 1997: agenda items 10 and 20.

Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities:

- 1 to 26 August 1994: agenda item 6;
- 31 July to 25 August 1995: agenda item 6;
- 4 August to 29 August 1997: agenda item 11.

Cooperation with United Nations bodies and specialized agencies

Commission on Human Rights

Between 1994 and 1997, the Secretary-General met several times with the Special Rapporteur on Religious Intolerance and his assistants at the United Nations Office at Geneva to inform them about specific situations in which the right to religious freedom was being violated, and to review information or documents that might be suitable for inclusion in *Conscience et liberté*, the Association's official publication.

UNESCO

The Association took an active part in the meeting of directors of human rights institutes held in Paris from 7 to 8 September 1993; and in the sixth meeting held in Strasbourg from 7 to 8 December 1994; and in the International Conference on Education held in Geneva from 3 to 8 October 1994.

Representatives of the Association made several visits to UNESCO to discuss issues concerning education in religious tolerance.

Other relevant activities

Action taken to implement United Nations resolutions (at the international, regional and national levels)

Between 1994 and 1997, the Secretary-General and representatives of the Association had frequent meetings with political and religious authorities and human rights organizations in several countries (Algeria, Angola, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, the Holy See, Hungary, Italy, Malta, Morocco, Mozambique, Portugal, Romania, the Russian Federation, Slovakia, Spain) in order to promote freedom of thought, belief and religion within the framework of the international law of the United Nations and the implementation of United Nations resolutions on religious tolerance. Among the meetings held were:

- Toulouse, October 1995: sittings of the Protestant Federation of France;
- London, November 1995: Centre for Human Rights of the University of Essex;
- Paris, January 1996: UNESCO Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations;
- Rome, February 1996: "La Sapienza" University;
- Bucharest, February 1996: Helsinki Committee meeting;
- Interlaken, March 1996: Swiss study group on criminology;
- Geneva, October 1996: United Nations Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations;
- Berne, October 1996: meeting with members of the Human Rights Advisory Council to the King of Morocco;
- Fribourg, November 1996: seminar on "The present-day phenomenon of sects";
- Budapest, March 1997: symposium organized by the Office of the Prime Minister;
- Madrid, May 1997: University of Granada, conference on religious freedom under constitutional law;
- Rio de Janeiro, June 1997: World Congress on Religious Freedom.

Consultation and cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in Geneva

The Association worked closely with the United Nations Centre for Human Rights, and now works with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights, the Special Rapporteur on Religious Intolerance and the Vice-Chairman of the Commission on Human Rights, to whom it has provided documents, information and participation in seminars, conferences and colloquia on freedom of thought, belief and religion.

Publicizing information on United Nations resolutions and activities

The Association publishes biannually a scholarly, non-denominational review, *Conscience et liberté*, in Bulgarian, French, German, Italian, Portuguese, Romanian and Spanish.

The magazine is circulated in 75 countries throughout the world. It regularly publishes articles, documents and information on the activities of the United Nations or its official representatives. Its issue No. 56 (1998) was devoted to the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the United Nations.

Project 2000 in collaboration with UNESCO

A seminar on the theme "Human rights and freedom of religion: the practice of tolerance and freedom in Western Europe" will be held from 17 to 20 June 2000 at the UNESCO headquarters in Paris in collaboration with the Director of the Division of Cultural Pluralism.

2. Himalayan Research and Cultural Foundation

(Special consultative status granted 1995)

Introduction

The Himalayan Research and Cultural Foundation is a multidisciplinary research, cultural and development facilitative organization engaged in appraising and creating awareness about various issues related to the Himalayan and trans-Himalayan regions in South and Central Asia, or parts thereof connected with its environment, biodiversity, regional development, human resources, history, culture, art and literature, social structures, economics, human rights, peace processes etc., thus contributing to sustainable development and promotion of human, educational and economic advancement of the peoples of the region, besides preserving and enriching their rich and variegated cultural heritage. The organization comprises of noted environmentalists, academics, area specialists, media persons, human rights defenders, social and cultural activists as its members. By means of its publications and activities, the organization has been disseminating the United Nations goals and programmes, besides providing a specialized input and expert analysis on a wide range of issues related to the United Nations programmes, thus serving as a link between the local, national and regional deliberations and the United Nations system.

Recognizing the importance of maintaining the eco-cultural system of the Himalayan and adjoining mountainous regions, which are rich and unique centres of biological and cultural diversity, and also in view of the need to study the problems of transition of the newly independent Central Asian countries, the Himalayan Research and Cultural Foundation has accorded priority to the study of these problems during the past four years. This report pertains to the period August 1995 to July 1999. During this period, the geographical membership of the organization has increased

to include Belgium, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation and Turkmenistan. Besides, the number of members from various countries has doubled during the last four years. The Himalayan Research and Cultural Foundation has established affiliation with the International Organization of Folk Art (an NGO having operational relations with UNESCO). The organization has endeavoured to network with local, national and international bodies to carry out specific programmes. For instance, UNHCR and ILO are financed the two national seminars on (a) the refugee situation in India and (b) child labour and rehabilitation.

Participation in the work of the Council and its subsidiary bodies and other United Nations bodies

Commission on Human Rights and Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, Geneva

The organization's representatives participated in the fifty-second through fifty-fifth sessions of the Commission on Human Rights, and in the forty-ninth and fiftieth sessions of the Subcommission, and made written presentations on the following agenda items/sub-items:

(a) Right of peoples to self-determination;

(b) Realization of economic, Social and cultural rights;

(c) Realization of the right of development;

(d) Contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination and xenophobia;

(e) International covenants on human rights;

(f) Rights of ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities;

(g) Prevention of discrimination and protection of minorities;

(h) Mass exoduses and internally displaced persons;

(i) Freedom of movement (human rights and population displacements);

(j) Enforced disappearances;

(k) Rights of children and youth;

(l) Rights of women.

Cooperation with United Nations programmes and bodies and specialized agencies

- Organized a national seminar on the refugee situation in India, in association with and with the support of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, New Delhi (India) on 13 May 1996. The seminar, which attracted large participation of academics, lawyers, human rights defenders and NGO activists, deliberated upon the issues of refugee problems in South Asia, humanitarian assistance, repatriation, asylum, urban refugee problem, cross-border migrations etc.

- Organized a two-day national seminar/workshop on the theme "Child labour and rehabilitation: some issues", with the support of the International Labour Organization on 30 and 31 July 1999 at New Delhi. The seminar brought together government agencies, policy planners, experts, academics, educational planners, manufacturers, teachers, released children, NGOs and social activists, besides the representatives of United Nations agencies such as the ILO, UNICEF, UNDP, World Bank and UNESCO. The seminar, which was organized as a follow-up to the ILO Convention banning Child Labour adopted in June 1999 at Geneva, made an in-depth assessment of the rehabilitation programmes for the released child labour and NFE programmes, and came up with action-oriented recommendations to alleviate the problems of child labour and their rehabilitation in India.

Other relevant activities

- As a means to propagate the United Nations resolutions, the organization has been publishing a quarterly journal, *Himalayan and Central Asian Studies* (with circulation of 1,500 copies), which has been highlighting the debates, resolutions and statements of United Nations bodies on issues related to the organization's area/subject of concern. As such, the organization's journal has covered in detail the proceedings of the fifty-second through fifty-fifth sessions of the Commission on Human Rights, and also of the forty-ninth and fiftieth sessions of the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities.

- The journal brought out a special issue (July-September 1997) on Afghanistan, featuring the report of the United Nations Special Rapporteur, Mr. Choong-Hyun Paik, on the human rights situation in Afghanistan.

- Organized a seminar cum exhibition of paintings on the theme "Human rights, mercenaries and terrorism" at Geneva on 1 April 1996.
- Inspired by the General Assembly resolution of 4 December 1989, and as a follow-up to the UNCHR resolution of 27 March 1998 on mercenaries, the organization organized a symposium on the theme "Mercenaries: challenge to democratic order" at Geneva in March 1998. Subsequently a special issue of the organization's journal (April-June 1998) was brought out on the problems of mercenaries, featuring the relevant United Nations resolutions on this issue.
- Prepared/submitted a paper to the Assistant Secretary-General, commenting on document A/53/170.
- The organization's representatives have been taking active part in United Nations activities related to preservation of environment and mountain eco-systems, sustainable development, children's/women's issues, human rights education, UNESCO's Silk Road project etc.
- Organized an international seminar on the theme "India and Central Asia in time and space" at New Delhi from 17 to 20 December 1995, in which more than 25 delegates from Central Asian countries of Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Mongolia participated.
- The organization's distinguished representative, an environmentalist and scientist, was conferred with the UNEP Sasakawa Environment Award in 1996, in recognition of his outstanding contribution to the protection and management of the environment and regional environmental planning for long-term ecological and economic security.
- In keeping with the importance attached by the Commission on Sustainable Development to the study of mountain eco-cultural systems, the organization and its members from Kyrgyzstan brought out a special issue (July-December 1998) on Kyrgyzstan, highlighting the unique aspects of this newly independent Central Asian republic and problems of its socio-economic transition. The three-day national seminar cum exhibition on the theme "Ethno-cultural heritage of Gujjars" was organized at Jammu University from 8 to 10 May 1999, in collaboration with the National Museum of Mankind and the Gujjar Charitable Trust. Similarly, the organization's representative actively collaborated with UNESCO to organize a seminar on the theme "Climate change and environmental impact on agricultural production" at Srinagar in October 1998.
- In connection with the United Nations Environment Day on 5 June 1999, the organization brought out a special issue of its quarterly journal (April-June 1999) highlighting problems of environmental degradation, water sharing and eco-cultural heritage.
- The organization's representative made a special presentation at a seminar organized by UNIFEM at Delhi on 8 July 1999, in connection with World Population Day.
- The organization's representative participated in a UNESCO-sponsored international seminar on the theme "Shared social ecology of seven Himalayan countries" at Bhopal from 26 to 28 November 1998.
- The organization's representative participated in the Hague appeal for peace conference at The Hague in May 1999.

Publications

Society and Culture in the Himalayas (New Delhi, 1995).

Central Asia: Emerging New Order (New Delhi, 1995).

Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh: Linguistic Predicament (New Delhi, 1996).

Artisan of the Paradise: History of Arts of Kashmir (New Delhi, 1999).

Bulletin of Himalayan Research and Cultural Foundation (three issues in 1996)

Himalayan and Central Asian Studies, quarterly, published since 1997.

Geographical distribution of members

Americas

United States	4 individuals

Asia

Egypt	1 individual
India	110 individuals
Kazakhstan	1 organization, 3 individuals
Kyrgyzstan	6 individuals
Mongolia	3 individuals
Nepal	1 organization, 4 individuals
Republic of Korea	1 individual
Uzbekistan	3 individuals

Europe

Austria	1 organization
Belgium	1 individual
Russian Federation	1 individual
Sweden	3 individuals
Switzerland	1 individual
United Kingdom	1 individual

While the organization's location in India predisposes it to a disproportionately high membership within India as a whole, it has been making efforts to associate those members from other countries who have proven expertise in the field and who indicated their strong desire to participate in the activities of the organization.

3. International Federation of Persons with Physical Disability*

(Special consultative status granted in 1983)

Introduction

The International Federation of Persons with Physical Disability (FIMITIC) was created in 1953. It is a non-profit, politically independent and religiously neutral organization. The purpose of FIMITIC is the improvement of social, occupational and societal conditions of persons with physical disabilities. FIMITIC promotes the equalization of opportunities for disabled persons and fights against their discrimination.

Acting in the interest of the equality of all human beings, the work of FIMITIC is based on the principles and structures laid down in the United Nations Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities. FIMITIC's fundamental principle is the equality of all human beings, regardless of their gender, ethnic, political or religious beliefs, or any difference in physical or intellectual capacities.

Supported by networks and actively cooperating with national organizations and institutions of physically disabled, FIMITIC has contributed towards achieving the following objectives:

1996: Improving cultural and social relations among persons with physical disabilities throughout the world strengthening of the national member organizations' and institutions' powers to represent the interests of physically disabled persons;

1997: Enhancing the exchange of experiences and opinions through holding meetings, conferences and organizing other gatherings;

1998: Developing approaches and action plans for dealing with authorities, influential institutions and other bodies in matters of a supranational nature, aimed at furthering the rights and opportunities of persons with physical disabilities in order to achieve social equality and full participation in community life.

Since 1995, there has been an increase in the geographical membership, including Belgium Greece, Latvia, Lithuania and Slovakia. FIMITIC is on the ILO Special List. It is in consultative status with the Council of Europe and a member of the Funders Advisory Board of the Disability Intergroup of the European Parliament and of the European Disability Forum.

Participation in the work of the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary bodies and other United Nations bodies

FIMITIC representatives attended the different sessions of the Vienna NGO Committee for Disabled Persons, which focused on disability, ageing, family, social development and peace. During the last four years, much cooperative work was done in the field of the elaboration of general outlines of regulations for the creation of equal opportunities for persons with disabilities (Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities), for the World Conference of Human Rights, and for the review conference on the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects (landmines).

The pressure which NGOs exerted at the World Conference by opposing the use of mines and other excessively injurious weapons with indiscriminate effects had concrete and positive results. First, the universality of human rights and the integration of women's rights in the general human rights programme could be achieved, as well as the appointment of a United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, whose function was extremely controversial at the Conference itself. The important role of the NGOs has been underlined in various parts of the action programme and in the Vienna resolution: the World Conference urged for a quick adoption of the resolution on defenders of human rights, and emphasized the right of

* Formerly the International Federation of Disabled Workers and Civilian Handicapped.

NGOs to carry out their activities for the implementation of human rights without being hampered.

The conference on the banning of mines was very fruitful. The Vienna conference adopted a protocol which prohibits the transfer and use of anti-personnel laser weapons. The two following conferences at Geneva have resulted in a partial ban on anti-personnel mines. A number of States have already passed national laws or are working on their legislation that would guarantee prohibition of anti-personnel mines in their territory.

At the Vienna International Centre, unfortunately considerable difficulties arose due to the restructuring of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs. Later, important departments were transferred to New York. Despite this fact, the Vienna committees try to intensify cooperation with the committees in New York and Geneva to keep up the flow of information.

Statements were made on the preparatory work for the International Year for the Eradication of Poverty, the special session on disarmament, the negotiation process for a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Europe, the fourth United Nations report on the implementation of the Habitat Agenda etc.

Unfortunately, a FIMITIC representation in New York during the reporting period could not be realized, but constant contact with liaison staff in Vienna/Geneva and New York was maintained.

Cooperation with United Nations programmes, bodies and specialized agencies

FIMITIC focuses its activities on ensuring equalization of opportunities and full participation of persons with physical disabilities. It fights against all kinds of discrimination against disabled persons. It supports member organizations and the institutions in their endeavours to advocate the concerns of physically disabled persons, both at the national and international levels.

The support was given to the work of the United Nations Special Rapporteur. FIMITIC was closely working with the representatives of WHO and the ILO. In particular, large efforts were made in support of the initiative for an international research study on the reintegration of disabled employees into working life as well as for the development of an Internet home page.

The process of restructuring in Central and Eastern European countries has resulted in apparently unavoidable mass unemployment. FIMITIC was engaged in public policy debates on active labour-market issues in support of ILO policies, which attach much importance to information work and the retaining of disabled persons.

Other relevant activities: congresses, seminars, training courses

Representatives in chargeof the Centre, WHO and the ILO were present or information was transmitted on the events organized by FIMITIC below:

29 September 1995 Rome	Symposium on the theme "Social development in Europe"
22-25 August 1996 Graz, Austria	Seminar with workshops on the subject: "Disability + motherhood = human right?"
27 September 1997 Vienna	Socio-political session on the subject: "Employment for persons with disabilities: an Utopia?"

Publications

In regard to the principles of the United Nations Charter, supported by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of the Disabled, resolutions were passed and the following publications made, *inter alia*:

1997: on landmines, adopted by the FIMITIC Delegates Conference on 27 September 1997 at Vienna;

1998: on the Kosovo conflict, adopted by the FIMITIC Extraordinary Delegates Conference on 14 and 15 May 1999 at Budapest.

Press releases of FIMITIC on various disability issues were distributed.

Interregional projects/regional and country projects

Following the United Nations initiative to declare the third of December as "International Day of Disabled Persons", the FIMITIC and its members were organizing and participating in events demonstrating the need to ensure equal rights and opportunities for disabled people, especially through the European Day of Disabled Persons, on the following themes:

1996: Equal opportunities — equal participation (with special contribution by FIMITIC, with an input entitled "Women and disability: double discrimination";

1997: "Empowerment of disabled people: building civil dialogue";

1998: "Breaking barriers together", "Promoting the rights of disabled people" and "Disabled people as consumers";

1999: Disabled people and violence.

Public and political awareness campaigns were supported in active cooperation with NGOs and partners within the HELIOS programmes of the European Commission and membership of the independent European Disability Forum.

Membership

In Africa, Asia and the Pacific Rim, and Latin America and the Caribbean, the member associations of FIMITIC continuously take part in disability prevention and rehabilitation programmes.

FIMITIC is a member of the International Disability Centre Committee. The International Disability Centre, set up and sponsored by the International Disability Foundation, located at Geneva, was officially opened on 4 July 1997 at Ferney-Voltaire, France, with the Secretary-General present at the ceremony.

4. The Jordanian Hashemite Fund for Human Development*

(Special consultative status granted 1995)

Introduction

The Fund's mission statement reflects the emphasis placed on the human value as the most valuable element in the development process. It reads: "To play a leading role in advancing comprehensive and sustainable human development through the enhanced participation of Jordanians, the Jordanian Hashemite Fund for Human Development strives to impact best development practices at the national level, drawing on its experience and local presence, while creating opportunities and expanding the choices of Jordanians to play a central role in the process of shaping the country's future."

The Fund upholds international principles, which locate human needs at the heart of the development agenda. It seeks to reflect Jordanians' national pride, and the pledge to develop the potential of people as the country's most precious asset. By ensuring the dignity and well being of Jordanians and promoting human values as imperative prerequisites for achieving human development, the sustainability of impact is virtually persevered at all times based on the empowerment and integration of disadvantaged groups into society.

The Fund has carried out a wide range of objectives aimed at addressing the essential needs of the underprivileged in the country's deprived areas. Its front line operations are widely pursued through a network of 50 community development centres. These centres act as focal-points, which cater to the development needs at the grass roots in Jordan's hardship areas and localities. Along with its principal aim of improving the livelihood of its target groups, the Fund endeavours to promote social infrastructure and its corresponding basic services, in order to minimize the tendency of urbanization. In the effort to develop permanent and sustainable self-reliance of its target groups, income-generating activities such as revolving loans initiatives, form one of the central strands of the Fund's priority interventions.

Different programmes undertaken by the Fund are geared specifically to help rural women discover their potential and thus improve family income. As centres are directed towards playing a synergistic role in development efforts at local levels, they foster activities ranging from awareness raising and training, to initiating productive projects with clear emphasis on community participation. Over 100,000 individuals, mostly women, have attended community training sessions in various related areas, since the Fund was initiated. As a result, almost 80 per cent of the trainees are engaged in income-generating activities, which in turn create new local and regional employment opportunities.

Participation in the work of the Economic and Social Council and other United Nations bodies

- Better parenting, in cooperation with UNICEF, which aims at expanding the original initiative into five additional centres, increasing male participation in the project's activities and building the capacity of the Centre's staff who are directly involved in the project.
- Community participatory rangeland management, in cooperation with IFAD, with the aim to demonstrate innovative and sustainable community participatory approach through implementing awareness-raising programmes. It also calls for the training of approximately 400 local community members on skills and principles of rangeland management.

* Formerly the Queen Alia Fund for Social Development.

- The development of palm production in cooperation with IFAD to promote palm production in the Wadi Araba area in the South with training as its main activity.
- Revolving loan fund, in cooperation with UNIFEM, which aims at fostering the economic and social empowerment of women working in agriculture at the grass-roots level, by ensuring that these women have direct control over the products of their labour. It also calls for developing a sustainable credit model for grass-roods women for potential replication at national or regional levels.
- Poverty alleviation, in cooperation with UNDP, with the following two main components:

  (i) Technical assistance to strengthen the Fund's capacity for sustainable micro-finance operation (institutional assessment, staff training etc.);

  (ii) A capital micro-finance fund for on-lending to micro borrowers, such as the economically disadvantaged groups and women in particular.
- Rehabilitation of eroded land, in cooperation with the Global Environment Facility (GEF)/UNDP, with the main objectives of:

  (i) Promoting and disseminating successful approaches of conserving biodiversity and rehabilitation of degraded land;

  (ii) Encouraging local community and other local NGOs to participate and become more positively involved in the protection of environment.

Other activities

The Fund continues to supervise its large-scale projects initiated in the fields of agriculture, handicrafts, and eco-tourism. They are designed to:

- Create new job opportunities (the first eco-tourism project in Jordan has been established by the Fund in the historical area of Wadi Rum);
- Train and upgrade skills;
- Enhance better management of local resources;
- Strengthen institutional capacity, protect environment and preserve traditional handicrafts (the Palm Plantation, which is situated at Aqaba, in South Jordan, is a pilot project that endeavours to address Jordan's national needs for high-quality dates);
- Contribute to the environmental reformation through combating and zones; restore Islamic and Arab cultural heritage through the high-quality production of ceramics (the ceramics and pottery project, which has progressively gained a reputation for its unique production of high-quality oriental styles).

5. Liberal International (World Liberal Union)

(General consultative status granted in 1995, special in 1985)

Introduction

The Liberal International (LI) is the world union of 83 liberal political parties from 54 countries and territories and was founded in 1947. The organization coordinates the international activities of the member parties and provides a platform for exchange of ideas and experiences. The organization aims at promoting freedom, tolerance, democracy, international understanding, human rights and an economy based on free market principles. At the time of the previous report, LI had 73 parties in 46 countries; expansion since then has been in Central and Eastern Europe, Africa and — to a lesser extent — Asia.

Participation in the work of the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary bodies and other United Nations bodies

- In May 1994, in response to a letter from the Director-General of UNESCO, requesting comments on the draft medium-term plan for 1996-2001 and the draft programme and budget for 1996-1997, the Bureau of LI prepared a series of comments focusing on making UNESCO even more oriented towards involvement of citizens.
- 4 September 1994, during the LI Congress at Reykjavik, the Liberal International Prize for Freedom was presented to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Sadako Ogata. The Prize for Freedom was a recognition not only of her personal commitment to help refugees worldwide but also of UNHCR as a whole. Ms. Ogata attended our Executive Committee meeting of May 1995 at Bern to receive the Prize in person.
- In 1994 and 1995, at meetings at Lilongwe and Cape Town, and at Manila and Taipei, respectively, the African and Asian groups of LI strengthened their cooperation. Built around the European Parliament,

the European networking of liberal parties became ever stronger and more effective.

- In cooperation with the International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development based at Montreal, as well as the Socialist International and the International Democratic Union, a meeting on human rights was organized at Ottawa in April 1995. In a joint statement issued after the meeting, the participating organizations called for increased funding for the United Nations Centre for Human Rights and global implementation of the various United Nations declarations and covenants on human rights.
- The 1995 Prize for Freedom was presented to Aung San Suu Kyi of Burma. Requests by Sir David Steel, President of LI, to visit her to present the Prize were declined by the Burmese authorities, who continuously argued that a visit by the President of Liberal International was "not convenient".
- LI's International Network of Liberal Women played an active role during the Fourth World Conference on Women at Beijing in September 1995. A substantial delegation was present at Beijing, and a special booklet entitled "The status of women" was presented at the Conference.
- The assassination of LI Vice-President Jorge Carpio Nicolle in Guatemala in 1993 has continued to be a focus of the activities of LI's Human Rights Committee throughout previous years. The Committee, in cooperation with LI member parties, has worked to keep pressure on the Guatemalan authorities to start a serious investigation and bring the perpetrators to justice.
- LI was the first political international to be present on the World Wide Web and use this new technology to involve and inform internally as well as externally. The site (located at http://www.worldlib.org/) is still one of the main international political sites, and is complemented by a weekly newsletter by e-mail available to anyone. The whole project was and is managed in cooperation with other international Liberal International organizations. LI has been making efforts to expand the use of this new technology, especially into developing countries. This has been an ongoing project since 1995. The Web site links directly to United Nations institutions, and the newsletter regularly contains information on United Nations institutions and issues.
- In June 1996, the Prize for Freedom was awarded to Martin Lee, democracy activist from Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of China.
- In September 1996, Liberal International was represented in the forty-ninth annual DPI/NGO Conference, which took place at United Nations Headquarters.
- In March 1997, Liberal International was represented at the Commission on Human Rights session at Geneva.
- The 1997 Prize for Freedom was awarded to Olusegun Obasanjo, former head of State and democracy activist of Nigeria. Mr. Obasanjo continues to remain in prison.
- Throughout the period 1994-1997, LI has attended meetings of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. LI also participated in the various NGO forums of the Council of Europe.

Resolutions and publications

During our congresses in September 1994, June 1996 and November 1997, the United Nations was always on the agenda. Resolutions dealing with the United Nations and its specialized agencies and issues of disarmament and peacekeeping were adopted. In his speech in the 1997 Congress, LI President Frits Bolkestein called for increased funding for the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. The Secretary-General of the United Nations has been invited to all these congresses.

In the period 1994-1997, LI published 19 issues of the newsletter *London Aerogramme*. Also published were a booklet on the Fourth World Conference on Women; a book, *Working to End Domestic Violence*, with many recommendations for action; a handbook entitled "Local politics toolkit"; and a book on the history of Liberal International, *A Sense of Liberty*. On 31 October 1996, LI started publishing a weekly newsletter by e-mail, which is available to member parties and the general public.

6. Panamerican-Panafrican Association

(Special consultative status granted 1995)

Introduction

The Association is an international organization concerned with:

- Promoting, encouraging and fostering better human relations, understanding and good will among peoples of the United States, the Americas and Africa and other developing countries, through cultural, educational, and economic exchange initiatives, including the promotion of interchange of ideas;
- Advancing international understanding through programmes which call for broad application of the universal language of arts and humanities, the social behavioural, and physical sciences, and related disciplines, including but not limited to comparative studies and consultations on related public policy issues;
- Bridging gaps of misunderstanding between first, second, and developing world communities through the medium of exchange of ideas;
- Citizen diplomacy;
- Human rights advocacy.

Participation in the work of the Economic and Social Council and other United Nations bodies

Though the Association had been informally active in several United Nations major cultural, educational and economic exchange programmes which the Foundation sponsored and supported in tandem with the OAU Mission to the United Nations and with several Palestinian and African Observer Missions to the United Nations, and particularly with accredited African and Latin American State-Missions to the United Nations with the knowledge and active support of several United Nations Secretaries-General (i.e. Trygve Lie, Dag Hammarskjöld, Kurt Waldheim and Jávier Pérez de Cuellar).

August 1995-August 1997: The Association's NGO representatives in New York City, Geneva, Vienna, Addis Ababa, Amman, Santiago and Bangkok made regular reports on the contacts which they developed at the respective sites of their United Nations NGO affiliations. The first few years' turnovers of the Association's United Nations NGO representatives were mostly occasioned by the scheduling difficulties of its NGO representatives, but was eventually resolved via the appointment of United Nations alternative NGO representatives.

The Association's Chairman (Robert Starling Pritchard) and Vice-President William James Ruidl) met with the leadership of the OAU contingent at the United Nations for the purpose of providing consultation on strategies to promote the objective of equity of access to equality of economic development, investment and international trade opportunity between third world States in Africa and developed States and also between least developed countries in Africa and worldwide.

September 1995: With the assistance of the Russian Mission to the United Nations, the Association sponsored a weekend Russian Federation-United States of America International Trade Conference at the West Point Military Academy. The conference addressed the pressing issues concerning the Russian economy, by presenting American experts in the general fields of economics, international trade and investment financing. The Association's business-related enterprise maintains a close and active relationship with key members of the Russian business community, who are working actively towards promoting its strategies towards "mutuality-of-benefit" objectives that can be inherent in all viable international trade relationships.

15 January 1997: The Association's NGO representative to the Economic and Social Council at Geneva, Walter Menicocci, the eminent Italian biologist and genetic engineer, presented a paper before governmental representatives during the tenth session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee of the convention to combat desertification. Dr. Menicocci's speech was followed by a radio interview on the United Nations Radio Network, which was broadcast throughout Africa.

13 March 1997: The Association's foundation-sponsored artist-in-residence (Kevin John Powell) presented his avant-garde cut-sculpture-painting to the World Federation of United Nations Association and became the youngest artist whose work is chosen for reproduction on the United Nations' first day cover annual stamp issue. Previous to that event, the artist had been feted at a reception at the Russian Mission to the United Nations, which was hosted by the Russian Ambassador to the United Nations.

June 1997: Publication in the *World and I* magazine (which is published in Washington, D.C., and distributed throughout the international community) of an article written by Dr. Menicocci and the Associations NGO representatives HenriGeorges Polgar and Lisa McFarren-Polgar on the

subject of earthwork technology as a method to combat desertification.

August 1997: The Secretary of the convention to combat desertification issued United Nations document ICCD/COP(1)6/Add.1 with a proposed roster of independent experts, among whom was Dr. Walter Menicocci

8-22 August 1997: Dr. Menicocci attended the tenth session of the negotiating committee for the convention to combat desertification held at Geneva, in his capacity as an independent expert.

October 1997: Dr. Menicocci presented a paper during the first conference of the parties of the convention to combat desertification (which was held in Rome between 29 September and 10 October 1997). Present during Dr. Menicocci's speech were governmental and non-governmental organizations representing the countries of Italy, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, the United Republic of Tanzania, South Africa, Kenya, Cuba, El Salvador, Argentina and Mexico. Immediate requests were made by the Governments of Cuba, Mexico, El Salvador and Burkina Faso to establish earthwork fertilization projects in their respective countries.

31 January 1998: Invitation extended to Dr. Menicocci by the Green Cross/Burkina Faso to visit their country and collaborate on the implementation of projects to combat desertification.

February 1998: The internationalization of the annual month-of-February Black History Month observance (founded by Robert Starling Pritchard on 1 February 1965 by mayoral proclamation in New York City and by gubernatorial proclamation in Trenton, New Jersey) was initiated in Liberia on 1 February 1998, South Africa on 1 February 1999, and will be debuted in Togo, Ghana and Benin on 1 February 2000 (as a major derivative of the Panafricanist orientation of the Association's educational, cultural and economic exchange permanent programme units (as had been advanced during its tenure as a United Nations NGO).

16-20 February 1998: Visit by Dr. Menicocci and his scientist colleague Dr. Brunello Ceccanti (NGO-Geneva) to Aguascalienties, Mexico, to meet with government officials to discuss the implementation of the "Robert Starling Pritchard food for humanity foundation" (including programmes for making Dr. Menicocci's earthworm fertilization process economically available to poor "so-called" third world nations.

19 February 1998: Letter of intent signed between Dr. Walter Menicocci, Dr. Brunello Ceccanti and the Mexican Comision Estatal de Agua Potable y Alcantarillado del Estado de Aguascalientes, confirming the commitment of the Mexican Government to implement the foundation.

April 1998: Visit by Dr. Roberto Spandre (a Dr. Menicocci assistant) one of the foundation managers, to El Salvador, to meet with the Ministry of the Environment to discuss the earthworm fertilization project.

1 May 1998: Presentation of a speech by Dr. Menicocci and Dr. Ceccanti at the fourth regional meeting of the Latin America and Caribbean region, held in Antigua regarding the foundation's earthworm fertilization project.

5 May 1998: Visit by Dr. Menicocci and Dr. Ceccanti to Camaguey City, Cuba, to evaluate a new landfill concerning the earthworm fertilization programme of the foundation.

6 May 1998: Visit by the Association's NGO representatives Dr. Menicocci and Dr. Ceccanti to the "Unidad de Lombricultura" of the Pinar del Rio province in Cuba (accompanied by members of the Cuban Ministry of Science, Technology and the Environment for the purpose of strategizing collaboration between the foundation and the Cuban Government towards combating desertification in Cuba.

May 1998: Detailed proposal presented by Dr. Menicocci and the roster of experts of the foundation to Dr. Pritchard on the six sub-projects to be implemented in Cuba.

June 1998: Draft contract drawn up between the Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment of Cuba and the Association for the purpose of establishing a foundation in Cuba.

June 1998: HenriGeorges Polgar and Lisa McFarren-Polgar attend the United Nations Conference on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples with members of the Onondaga Indian Nation of Syracuse, New York, to bring to the attention of the United Nations the brutal beating by 100 New York State Police of approximately 80 Native Americans attending a religious ceremony, and protest against the New York State tax compact that was signed by the New York State Governor and the Onondaga Nation Chiefs.

28 September 1998: Letter request to Dr. Menicocci from Oscar Oramas Oliva to review and comment on the platform for international cooperation to be presented at the First Africa/Latin America and the Caribbean Forum on Combating Desertification (held at Recife, Brazil, in October 1998).

14-16 October 1998: Working paper submitted by Dr. Menicocci and Dr. Ceccanti on the occasion of the first conference on the convention to combat desertification between Latin America and African countries held at Recife, Brazil, between 14 and 16 October 1998, in preparation for the second meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the convention, held at Dakar from 30 November to 10 December 1998.

7. World Federation of United Nations Associations

(General consultative status granted 1947)

Introduction

Former United Nations Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, has described WFUNA as the incarnation of the compelling declaration with which the Preamble of the United Nations Charter begins, "We the peoples of the United Nations ..."

Founded in Luxembourg on 2 August 1946 as a people's movement for the United Nations, the World Federation of the United Nations Associations (WFUNA) is the international, non-governmental organization devoted entirely to the support of the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter.

Participation in the work of the Economic and Social Council and its Subsidiary Bodies and Conferences and Other United Nations-Related Agencies and Programmes

Its governing bodies are the Executive Committee, which meets twice yearly, and the Plenary Assembly, which meets every two years. WFUNA headquarters is based at Geneva. The Federation also maintains an office at United Nations Headquarters in New York and regional Offices at Accra, Calcutta and Buenos Aires. Besides the Council, WFUNA enjoys consultative and working relations with UNESCO, UNICEF, WHO, FAO, the ILO and other agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system. WFUNA is also a member of the Bureau of the Special NGO Committee for Disarmament at Geneva, and of the NGO/UNESCO Liaison Committee. It is funded through annual dues from United Nations associations, and grants from donors.

WFUNA and United Nations associations activities were recognized and commended by the General Assembly in a resolution adopted on 3 December 1986.

WFUNA programmes

WFUNA projects and programmes encompass issues at the forefront of the United Nations work. Examples are:

- Disseminating selected information about United Nations activities;
- Promoting projects related to the United Nations role in crucial international issues especially human rights; supporting efforts for conflict avoidance and conflict resolution, disarmament, security and peace;
- Educating for international understanding;
- Fostering principles against racism and racial discrimination;
- Promoting the status of women;
- Mobilizing for sustainable development in a healthy environment.

Each is designed to study and enhance the multi-faceted aspects of the United Nations system. Whether initiating or sponsoring research, training and education on the United Nations and United Nations reform, on the Great Lakes region of Africa, on early conflict warning and prevention, on disarmament, the status of women, racism and racial discrimination, human rights and sustainable development and environmental protection, WFUNA remains committed to examining the critical issues before the United Nations — and to help find solutions that will shape our common future.

WFUNA participated actively in historic Conferences:

- The World Summit for Social Development (Copenhagen, 1995);
- The Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995);
- The United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) (Istanbul, 1996);
- The UNESCO World Conference on Science (Budapest, 1999).

It also participated at the 1998 meeting in Rome, where the International Criminal Court was established. Every year WFUNA has participated in the most important regular meetings of the Council, WHO, the ILO, UNCTAD and other United Nations bodies.

Other activities

Through its art and philatelic programme, WFUNA produces limited edition art prints and first day cover envelopes to accompany each United Nations stamp issue —

the themes of which are connected to current activities and programmes of the United Nations. Publicity material, including information on the selected theme, is sent to various art and philatelic journals as well as other media outlets, reaching sections of the international community that would not otherwise be informed.

WFUNA believed that the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations was an appropriate time, for reflection on the United Nations past record and, more importantly, for looking to the future of the United Nations and its role in the management of world affairs. WFUNA selected the theme "The United Nations at 50: achievements, lessons and challenges" to be the focus of the WFUNA Plenary Assembly, which was held at San Francisco from 28 to 31 June 1995, in conjunction with the festivities commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the signing of the United Nations Charter.

With member United Nations associations located in over 90 countries in every region of the world, WFUNA has given top priority to reaching all United Nations member States by the year 2005. Through activism, advocacy, research, educational programmes and the media, WFUNA's family of associations forms a unique "human bridge" between the United Nations system, national Governments and the people of the world.

WFUNA membership increased from 84 to 94 national United Nations associations (UNAs) in the last four years. Except for some UNAs that are located in countries of Africa, such as Sierra Leone, the Central African Republic, the Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ghana, and a few others where war and/or extreme poverty have prevented them from being as active as they used to be, most other UNAs are very active on United Nations-related actions, especially human rights, refugees, and education towards the United Nations. Particularly enthusiastic are the new UNAs in such emerging countries as Kyrgyzstan, Georgia, Samoa, Slovenia, the Slovak Republic and several countries in Latin America. Many UNAs in developing countries are hosted at UNDP offices and many have set up de facto United Nations information centres. Particularly active are UNAs in the Nordic countries, the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Canada, Italy and Germany. Model United Nations meetings for young people have been organized yearly in December at United Nations/Geneva. On the occasion of such momentous events as the war in Iraq and in Kosovo, WFUNA and several national UNAs have expressed their views on the wars and on the role of the United Nations.

Publications

WFUNA publishes the quarterly *WFUNA Newsletter*.